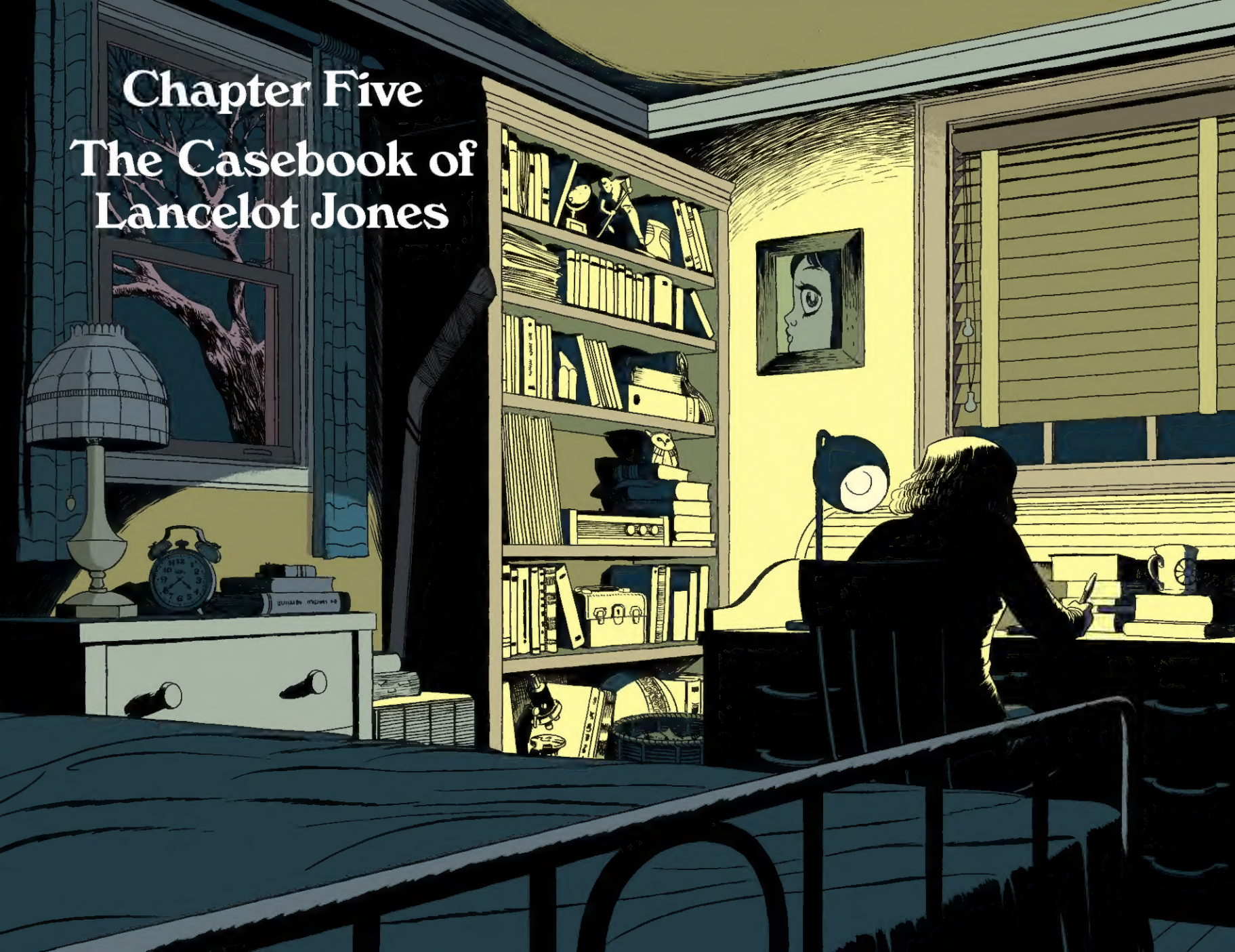
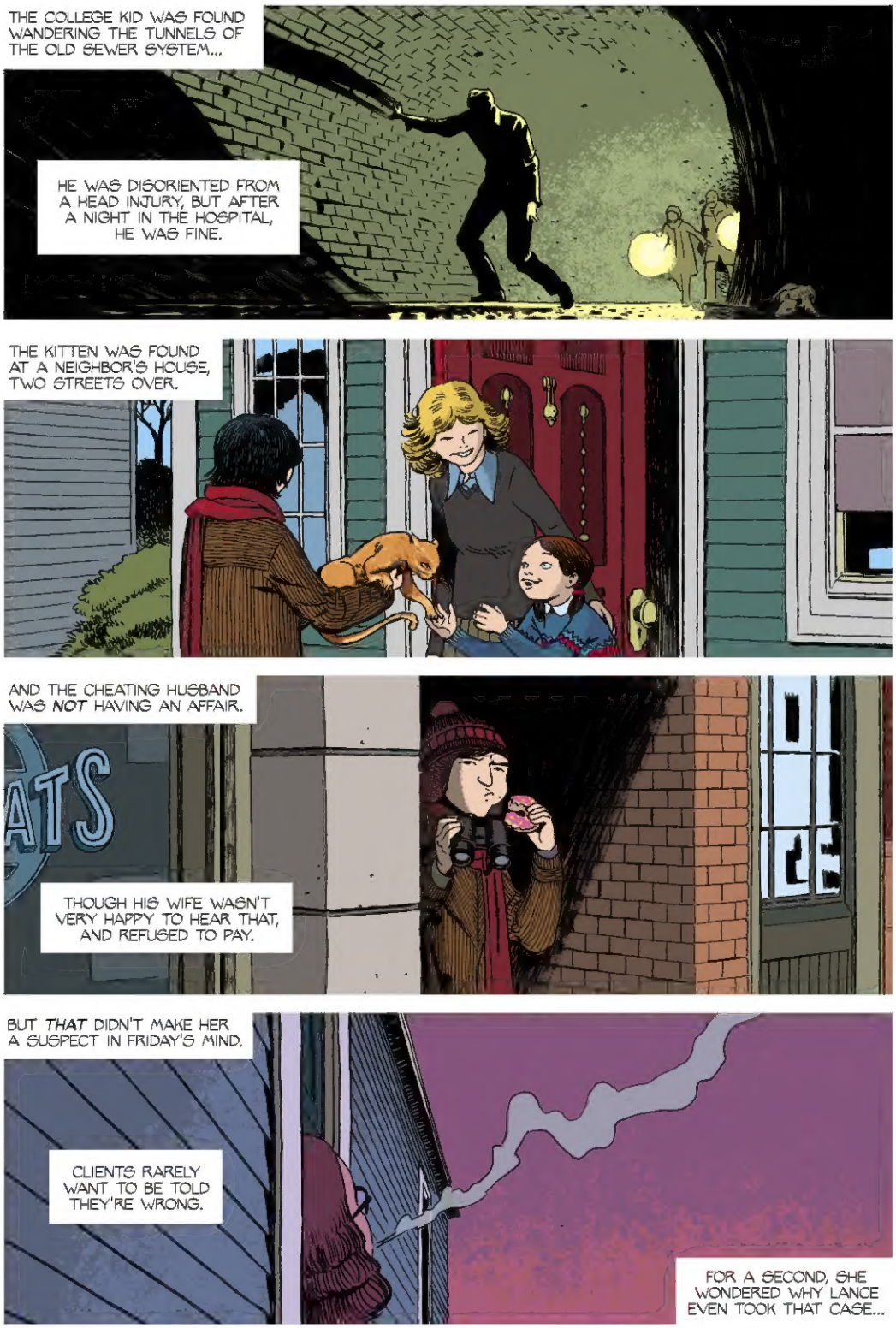
Friday

Ed Brubaker
Marcos Martín
Muntsa Vicente

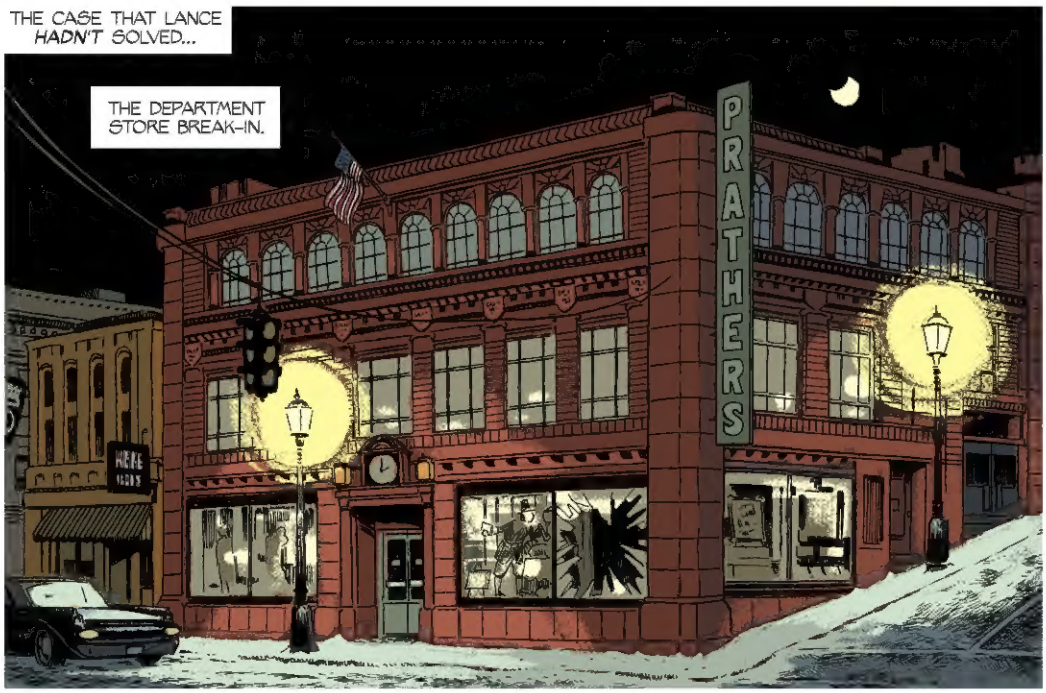

Chapter Five
The Casebook of
Lancelot Jones

LANCELOT JONES HAD ONLY FILLED 18 PAGES OF CASEBOOK #602...
AND FRIDAY READ THROUGH THEM FIVE TIMES BEFORE SHE STARTED TAKING HER OWN NOTES.
WHY HAD HE LEFT THIS BOOK TO HER?
Lancelot Jones casebook #602
THERE WAS NOTHING IN IT THAT POINTED TO LANCE. KNOWING HE WAS IN DANGER...
NO "FRIDAY, IF ANYTHING HAPPENS TO ME, IT WAS _____!" SCRAWLED ACROSS THE FINAL PAGE OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT.
IT WAS JUST HIS RECORD OF THE VARIOUS CASES HE'D BEEN INVESTIGATING THE LAST TWO MONTHS.
EVERYTHING FROM A MISSING COLLEGE STUDENT, A LATE NIGHT BREAK-IN AT THE DEPARTMENT STORE, A POSSIBLE CHEATING HUSBAND...
EVEN A LOST KITTEN...
RIGHT UP TO THE CASE OF THE ANCIENT STONE DAGGER...
THE CASE HE'D BEEN WORKING ON THE NIGHT HE DIED.

SO WHAT WAS SHE MISSING?
THERE *HAD* TO BE A THREAD HERE TO FOLLOW...
SOMETHING IN *ONE* OF THESE CASES...
SOME CLUE HE'D UNCOVERED SOMETHING MORE *SINISTER*...
BUT FRIDAY WASN'T SEEING IT.


THE COLLEGE KID WAS FOUND WANDERING THE TUNNELS OF THE OLD SEWER SYSTEM...
HE WAS DISORIENTED FROM A HEAD INJURY, BUT AFTER A NIGHT IN THE HOSPITAL, HE WAS FINE.
THE KITTEN WAS FOUND AT A NEIGHBOR'S HOUSE, TWO STREETS OVER.
AND THE CHEATING HUSBAND WAS *NOT* HAVING AN AFFAIR.
ATS
THOUGH HIS WIFE WASN'T VERY HAPPY TO HEAR THAT, AND REFUSED TO PAY.
BUT *THAT* DIDN'T MAKE HER A SUSPECT IN FRIDAY'S MIND.
CLIENTS RARELY WANT TO BE TOLD THEY'RE WRONG.
FOR A SECOND, SHE WONDERED WHY LANCE EVEN TOOK THAT CASE...

BUT THEN SHE WENT BACK TO THE ONE *ODD THING* IN THE BOOK...


THE CASE THAT LANCE *HADN'T* SOLVED...
THE DEPARTMENT STORE BREAK-IN.
PRATHERS

ON NOVEMBER 18TH AT *TWO O'CLOCK* IN THE MORNING, THE FRONT WINDOW OF THE *PRATHERS* DOWNTOWN HAD BEEN SMASHED...

AND TWO (POSSIBLY THREE) BURGLARS QUICKLY RANSACKED THE MEN'S CLOTHING SECTION.

NONE OF THE CASH REGISTERS WERE FORCED OPEN -THEY WERE EMPTY FOR THE NIGHT ANYWAY.
AND THE SAFE IN THE MANAGER'S OFFICE WAS ALSO LEFT UNTOUCHED.
THE ONLY THINGS STOLEN WERE SHOES, SUITS, TIES... ABOUT SIX CHANGES OF CLOTHING.

ALL FROM THE *UPPER-MIDDLE CLASS BUSINESSMAN* AREA OF THE SHOP.

SHERIFF BIXBY FIGURED IT WAS SOME WANDERING HOBOS WHO'D LEFT TOWN ON THE MORNING TRAIN...

AND MAYBE HE WAS RIGHT, BECAUSE LANCE DIDN'T CATCH ANYBODY.

AND THAT REALLY BUGGED HER, LANCE NOT CATCHING THE THIEVES...
OH, FRIDAY...
...PLEASE TELL ME YOU DIDN'T STAY UP ALL NIGHT.
I... UM, YEAH, I GUESS I DID.
I JUST NEVER REALLY GOT TIRED...
AND HAVE YOU BEEN SMOKING IN HERE?
YOUR MOM'LL HIT THE ROOF IF SHE SMELLS THAT.
I KNOW... SORRY...
I BLEW IT OUT THE WINDOW...
LISTEN, YOU'RE GOING THROUGH A HARD TIME... I GET IT...
BUT YOU CAN'T JUST STOP TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF.

I'LL BE FINE... REALLY.
I JUST HAVE TO SOLVE THIS...
NO ONE ELSE IS GOING TO.
WELL.... IS THERE ANYTHING I CAN DO TO HELP?
ACTUALLY, YEAH...
CAN YOU LET ME INTO THE HISTORICAL LIBRARY AT THE UNIVERSITY?
I GUESS I COULD DO THAT.
I HAVE SOME STUFF TO CATCH UP ON IN MY OFFICE.
GREAT. LET ME GET CHANGED AND I'LL MEET YOU AT YOUR CAR.
NO, YOU'LL MEET ME AT THE BREAKFAST TABLE.
WE'LL GO AFTER I SEE YOU EAT SOMETHING.

AUNT JODY WAS A PROFESSOR AT KINGSWOOD UNIVERSITY, ABOUT TWENTY MINJTES OUTSIDE OF TOWN...
HEY... DO ALL YOUR STUDENTS GO HOME FOR CHRISTMAS?

MOST OF THEM, BUT WE STILL HAVE SOME IN THE DORMS... WHY?
THERE'S A GUY I MIGHT TRY TO TALK TO...
FROM ONE OF LANCE'S CASES.
I MIGHT CHECK IF HE'S STILL HERE...
AFTER I'M DONE IN THE LIBRARY.

OKAY... JUST COME BY MY OFFICE WHEN YOU'RE READY TO LEAVE.

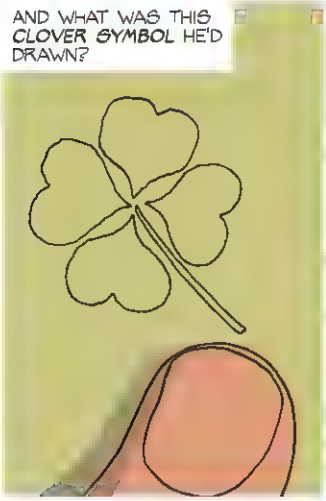
FRIDAY SPENT THE NEXT TWO HOURS GOING THROUGH MUSTY OLD BOOKS...
LOGIC
ANCIENT SYMBOLS OF NATIVE LANDS

THE SAME BOOKS SHE AND LANCE HAD LOOKED THROUGH A HUNDRED TIMES, AT LEAST.

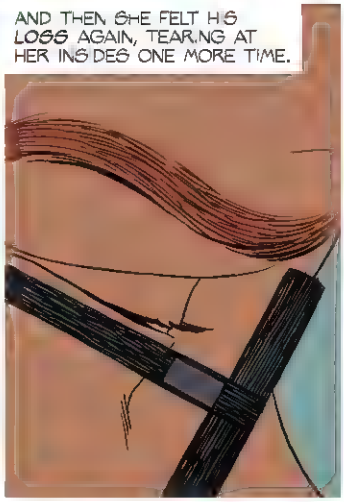
WHICH MADE HER FEEL EVEN MORE ALONE IN THIS BIG EMPTY SPACE.

BUT THEN SOMETHING STRANGE HAPPENED...
SHE'D HAD NO LUCK FINDING THE SYMBOL WEASEL CARVED INTO THE TREE...
AND SHE WAS JUST ABOUT TO GIVE UP...
WHEN SHE SPOTTED A BOOK THAT HAD BEEN PUT BACK ON THE WRONG SHELF.
WHAT...?
IT WAS A BOOK ABOUT THE OLD LORE OF KINGS HILL, BACK BEFORE IT WAS CALLED THAT...
LEGENDS of the LAND
AND SOMEHOW IT HAD BEEN MISPLACED *ON PURPOSE*...
AS IF LANCE KNEW HIS CASE NOTES WOULD LEAD HER HERE.
F.
-Find the girl in the trees and find the truth.
- L

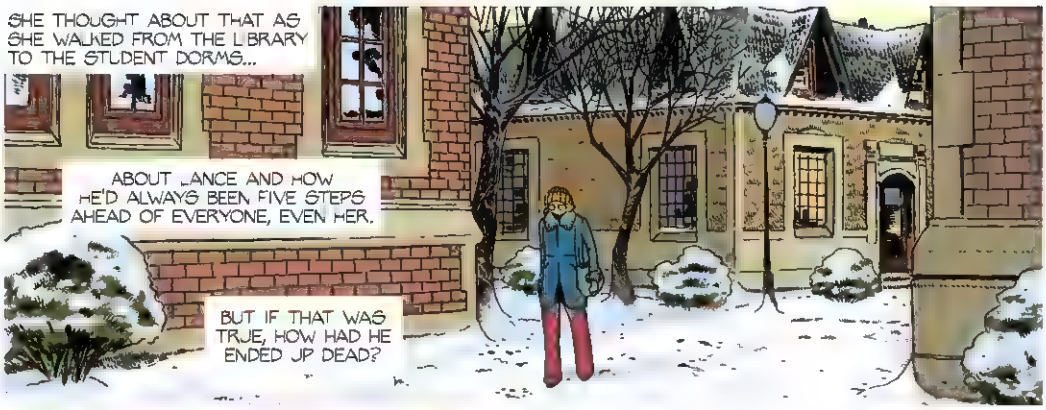
BUT WHAT THE HELL WAS THIS *NOTE* HE'D LEFT? THE GIRL IN THE TREES?
WAS HE TALKING ABOUT THE SHAPE SHE'D SEEN... THE GIRL SHE THOUGHT WAS *WATCHING* THEM?


AND WHAT WAS THIS *CLOVER SYMBOL* HE'D DRAWN?

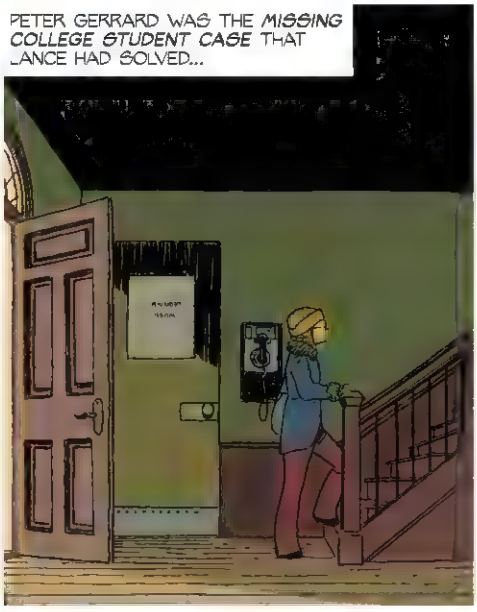
FOR A SECOND SHE WAS ACTUALLY ANNOYED AT HIM...
WHY DID HE *ALWAYS* HAVE TO BE SO CRYPTIC?

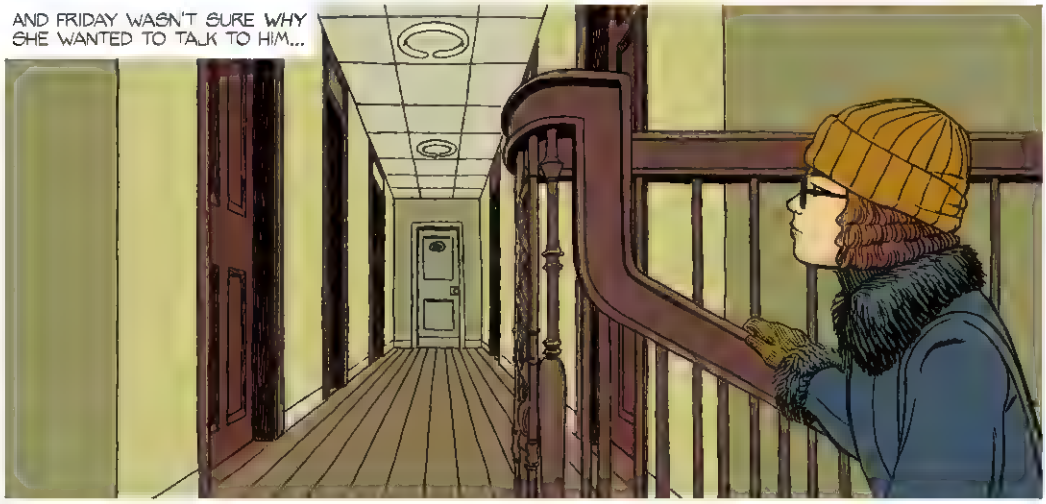

AND THEN SHE FELT HIS *LOSS* AGAIN, TEARING AT HER INSIDES ONE MORE TIME.

DAMN IT, LANCE... WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM ME...?


SHE THOUGHT ABOUT THAT AS SHE WALKED FROM THE LIBRARY TO THE STUDENT DORMS...
ABOUT LANCE AND HOW HE'D ALWAYS BEEN FIVE STEPS AHEAD OF EVERYONE, EVEN HER.
BUT IF THAT WAS TRUE, HOW HAD HE ENDED UP DEAD?

HEY, DO YOU KNOW IF PETER GERRARD LIVES HERE?
YEAH, HE'S ON THE SECOND FLOOR, DOWN AT THE END BY THE BATHROOMS.
STUDENT HOUSING


PETER GERRARD WAS THE MISSING COLLEGE STUDENT CASE THAT LANCE HAD SOLVED...


AND FRIDAY WASN'T SURE WHY SHE WANTED TO TALK TO HIM...

BUT RETRACING LANCE'S STEPS FELT LIKE THE ONLY MOVE SHE HAD LEFT.
HEY, YOU'RE *PETER*, RIGHT?
YES... CAN I HELP YOU WITH SOMETHING?
I HOPE SO...
YOU WENT *MISSING* FOR A FEW DAYS, BACK IN NOVEMBER?
UM, WELL, *SORT OF*... THAT ALL GOT BLOWN OUT OF PROPORTION...
I WAS PLAYING A GAME WITH SOME FRIENDS... AND I JUST GOT *LOST*...
KINGS
I'M SORRY... WHAT IS THIS *ABOUT*?
DO YOU REMEMBER THE GUY WHO *FOUND* YOU?
LANCELOT JONES?

NOT REALLY... I WAS KIND OF CONFUSED UNTIL THEY GOT ME TO THE HOSPITAL...
THE DOCTORS SAID I WAS DEHYDRATED... HALLUCINATING AND STUFF...
BUT WAIT- LANCELOT JONES...
IS THAT THE KID THAT WAS IN THE PAPERS LAST WEEK? GOT KILLED IN A FIRE?
YEAH. HE WAS MY FRIEND.
OH... WELL, I'M SORRY, BUT I DON'T REMEMBER HIM AT ALL...
I JUST HAVE THIS VAGUE IMAGE OF THE SHERIFF SHINING A FLASHLIGHT AT ME.
ALL RIGHT... THANKS FOR YOUR TIME.
ACTUALLY... WAIT A SECOND...

DOES THIS *SYMBOL* MEAN ANYTHING TO YOU?

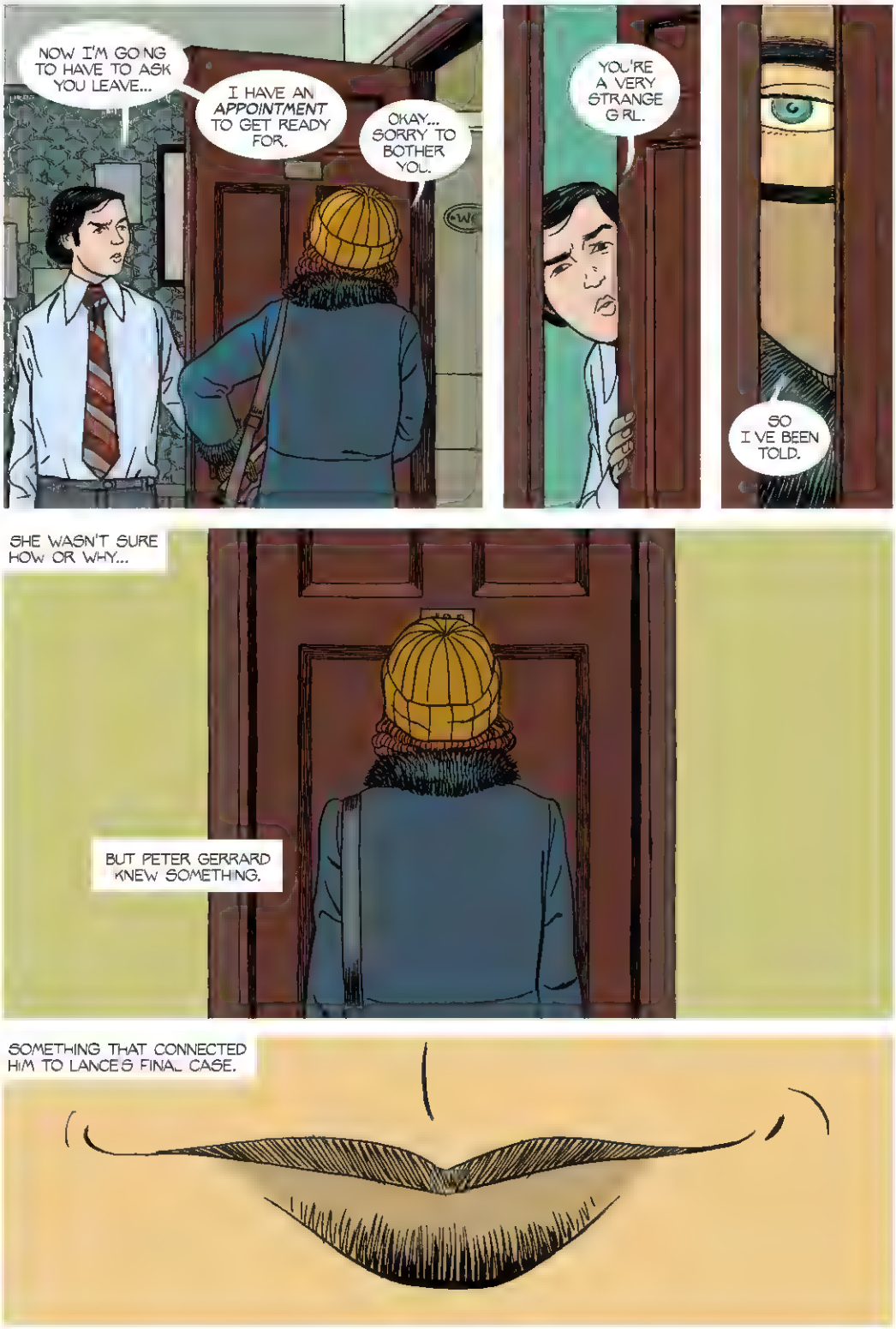
AND RIGHT THEN, SHE *KNEW.*
UH... NO.

WHAT ABOUT *THE WHITE LADY?*
HAVE YOU EVER HEARD OF *HER?*

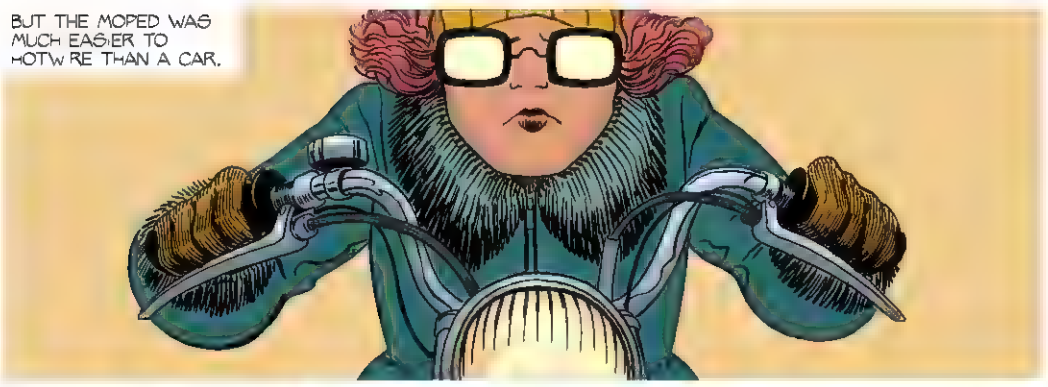
THE LIE WAS ON HIS FACE, EVEN AS HE TRIED TO HIDE T.
NO... I *HAVEN'T.*

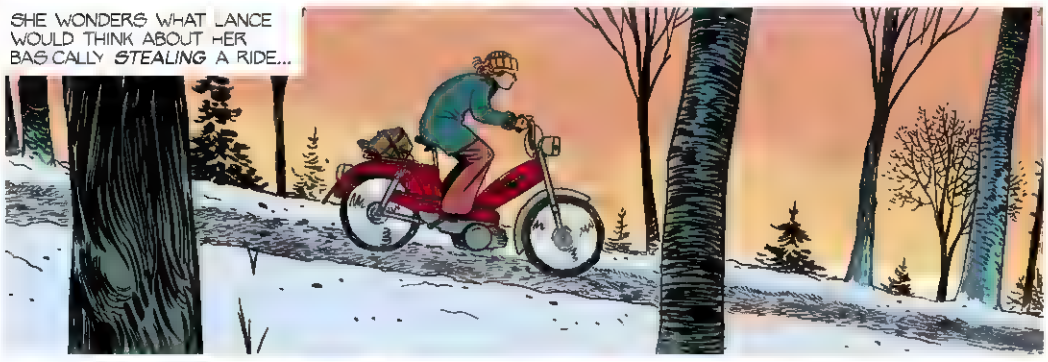
ARE YOU *SURE?*

YES.

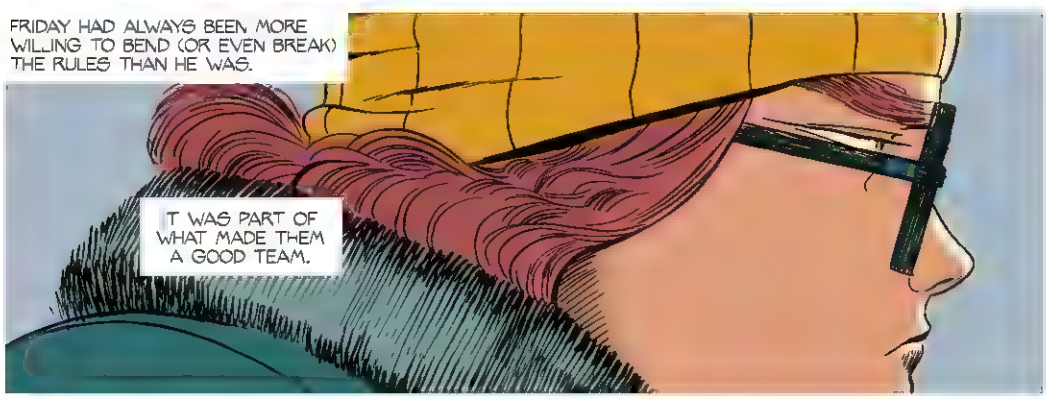

NOW I'M GOING TO HAVE TO ASK YOU LEAVE...
I HAVE AN *APPOINTMENT* TO GET READY FOR.
OKAY... SORRY TO BOTHER YOU.
YOU'RE A VERY STRANGE GIRL.
SO I'VE BEEN TOLD.
SHE WASN'T SURE HOW OR WHY...
BUT PETER GERRARD KNEW SOMETHING.
SOMETHING THAT CONNECTED HIM TO LANCE'S FINAL CASE.

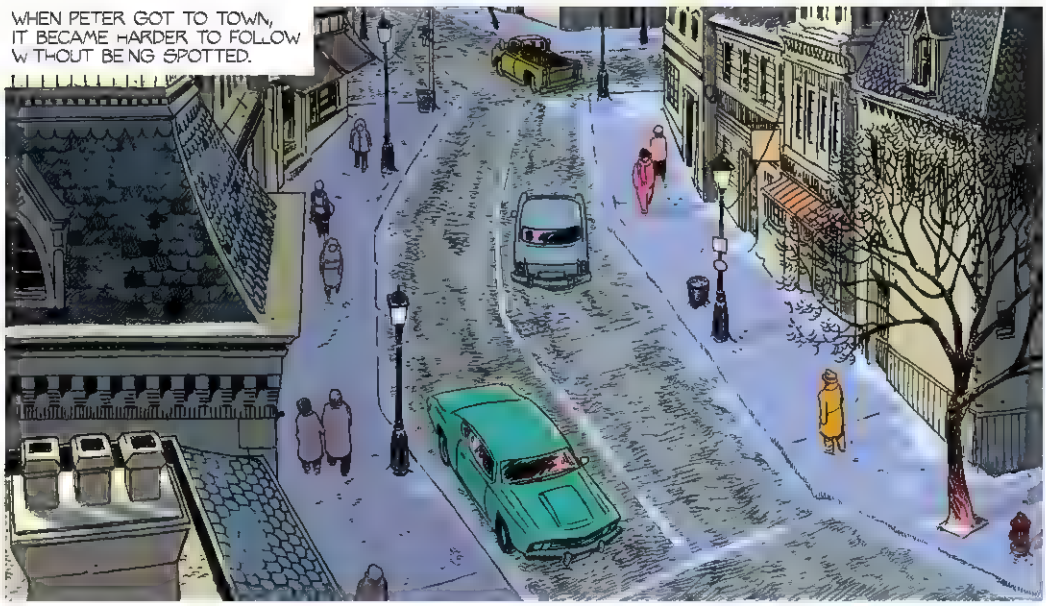
SO SHE WASN'T GOING TO LET HIM GET OUT OF HER SIGHT.
LAUNDRY ROOM
HEY AUNT JODY... I'VE GOT A LEAD, SO JUST GO HOME WITHOUT ME.
I'M GETTING A RIDE FROM A FRIEND.
PETER WAS IN A HURRY NOW...
HPLOV
WHICH DIDN'T LEAVE HER MUCH TIME TO FIGURE OUT HOW TO FOLLOW HIM...

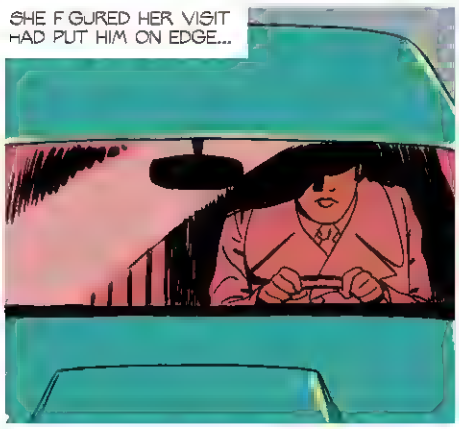

BUT THE MOPED WAS MUCH EASIER TO HOTWIRE THAN A CAR.


SHE WONDERS WHAT LANCE WOULD THINK ABOUT HER BASICALLY *STEALING* A RIDE...

BUT THEN SHE PUSHES THAT THOUGHT OUT OF HER MIND.

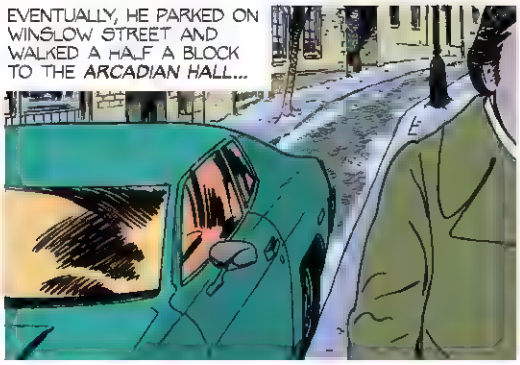

FRIDAY HAD ALWAYS BEEN MORE WILLING TO BEND (OR EVEN BREAK) THE RULES THAN HE WAS.
IT WAS PART OF WHAT MADE THEM A GOOD TEAM.

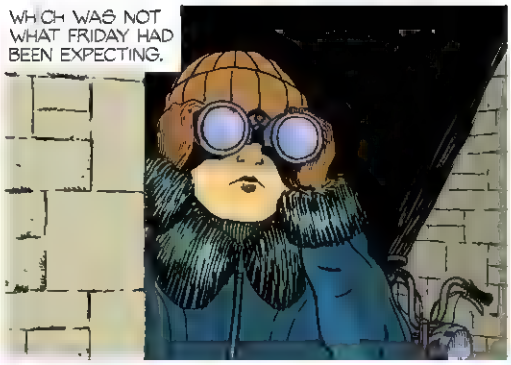

WHEN PETER GOT TO TOWN, IT BECAME HARDER TO FOLLOW W THOUT BE NG SPOTTED.

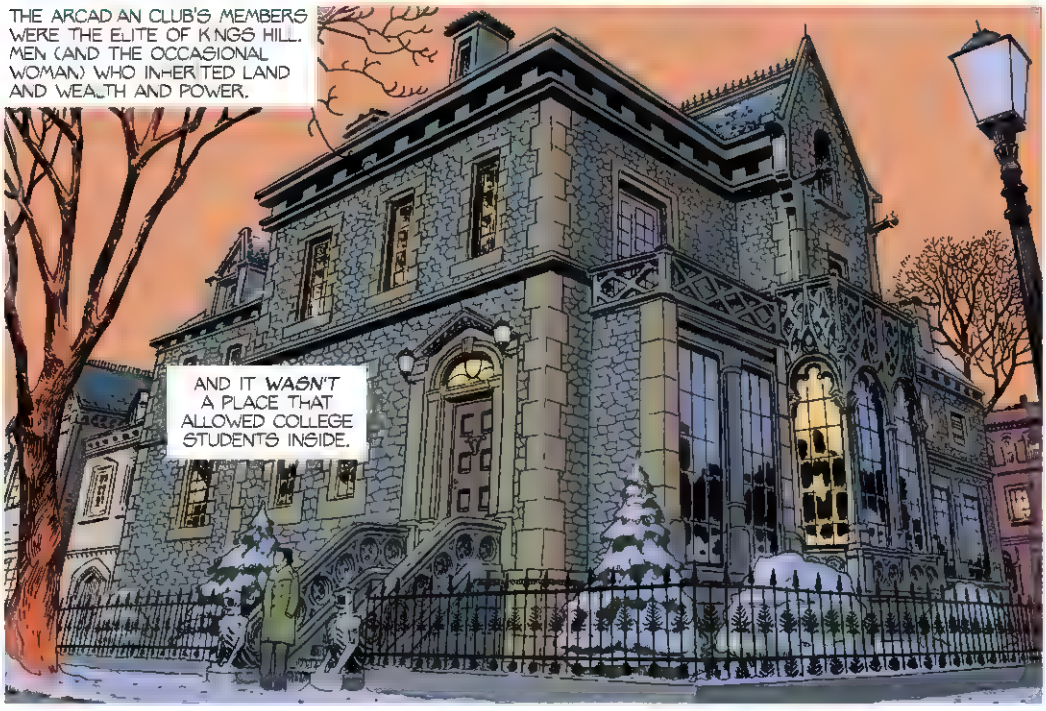

SHE F GURED HER VISIT HAD PUT HIM ON EDGE...

AND HE D PROBABLY BE CHECKING H.S REARVIEW MIRROR MORE THAN JSUAL.

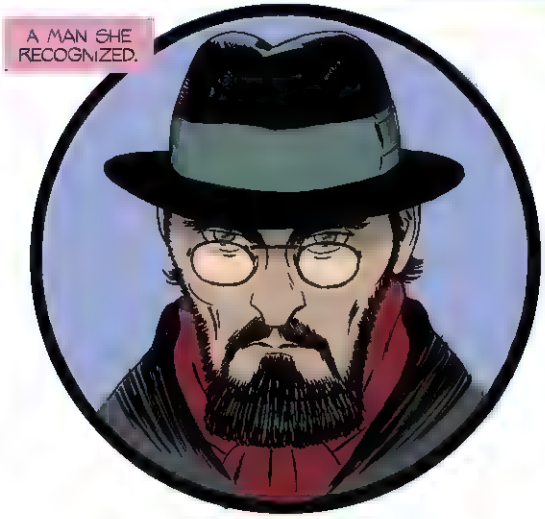
SO FRIDAY HAD TO STAY A FEW BLOCKS BEHIND...
OR DRIVE ON PARALLEL STREETS AND DOWN ALLEYWAYS.


EVENTUALLY, HE PARKED ON WINSLOW STREET AND WALKED A HALF A BLOCK TO THE ARCADIAN HALL...

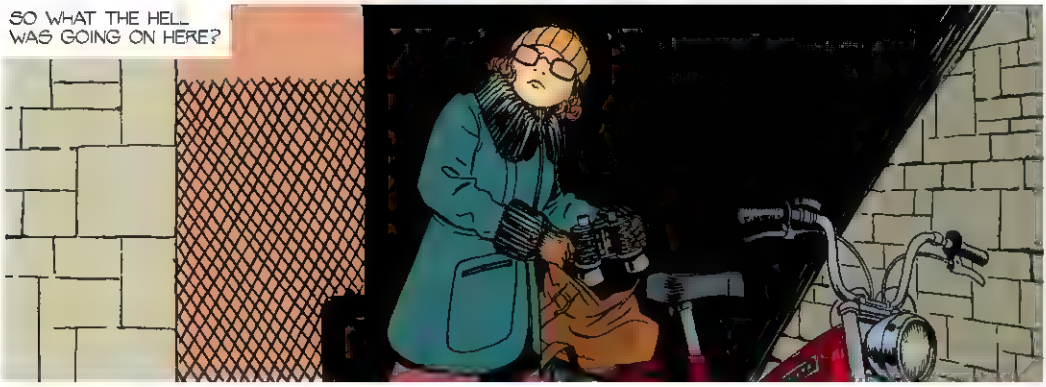

WHICH WAS NOT WHAT FRIDAY HAD BEEN EXPECTING.


THE ARCADIAN CLUB'S MEMBERS WERE THE ELITE OF KINGS HILL. MEN (AND THE OCCASIONAL WOMAN) WHO INHERITED LAND AND WEALTH AND POWER.
AND IT WASN'T A PLACE THAT ALLOWED COLLEGE STUDENTS INSIDE.

THEN SHE GOT ANOTHER SURPRISE, WHEN A MAN MET PETER OUTSIDE THE HALL'S FRONT DOORS...

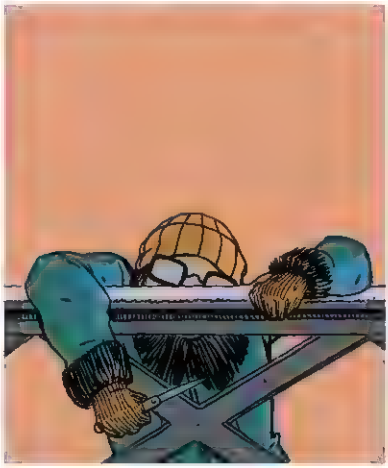

A MAN SHE RECOGNIZED.

IT WAS THE *HUSBAND* -THE ONE WHO WASN'T CHEATING ON HIS WIFE- FROM LANCE'S CASEBOOK.
THAT'S WEIRD...
AND THEN IT GOT EVEN WEIRDER...
DETECTIVE CROSS, THE COP WHO'D WORKED LANCE'S DEATH, WAS THERE, TOO...
COME ON IN...
HE'S BACK IN THE SITTING ROOM...


SO WHAT THE HELL WAS GOING ON HERE?

THREE YEARS AGO, DURING *THE CASE OF THE DROWNING DEER*, LANCE AND FRIDAY HAD FOUND A SECRET WAY INTO ARCADIAN HALL...

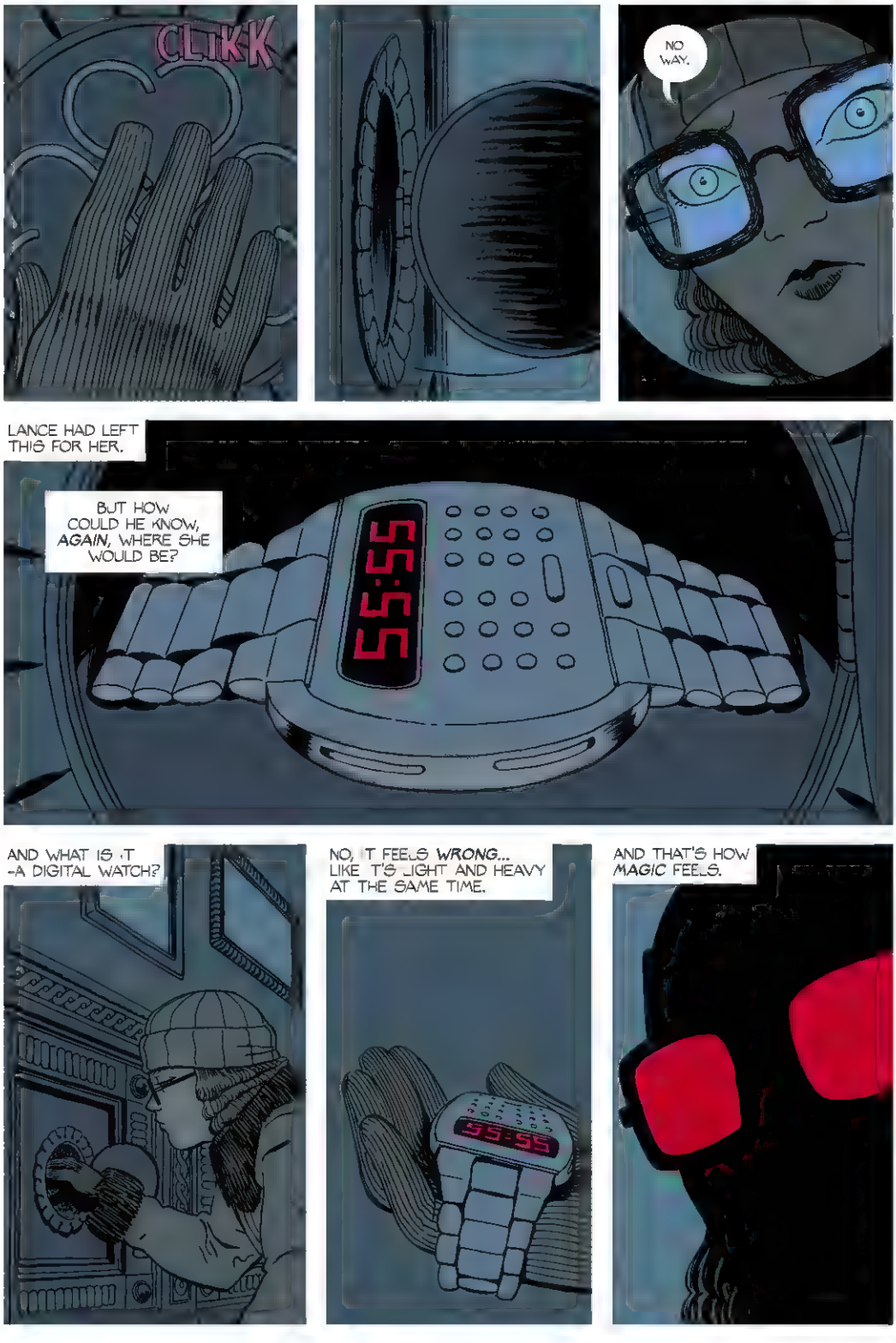
THE CLIMB WAS HARDER WITH ALL THIS SNOW...



BUT THE WINDOW LATCH WAS STILL EASY TO SLIP...
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT... WHAT GIRL?
I DON'T KNOW WHAT SHE CALLS HERSELF...
BUT SHE MENTIONED THE BOY... LANCELOT.
OH, ALL RIGHT THEN...
...I KNOW WHO YOU MEAN, HER NAME'S FRIDAY.
WELLINGTON WADSWORTH THE 3RD, WEASEL'S FATHER. THE RICHEST MAN IN TOWN, AND THE LEADER OF THE ARCADIAN CLUB.

LANCE AND FRIDAY HAD ALWAYS SUSPECTED HE WAS MORE THAN JUST A CROOKED BUSINESSMAN...
BUT NOTHING EVER STUCK TO THE MAN. IT WAS LIKE HE WAS BLESSED.
AND SHE'S NOTHING WE NEED TO WORRY ABOUT... JUST SOME NOSY LITTLE GIRL...
NO, YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND, S.R... SHE KNEW THE WHITE LADY.
NOT JUST HER NAME, BUT SHE'D *SEEN* HER.
I COULD SENSE IT.
SHE'S A DANGER TO US.
NONSENSE... WE HAVE THE *DAGGER*, CORRECT?
YES... AND THE MOON TOMORROW ALIGNS WITH THE STARS...
SO THE *CEREMONY* IS UPON US...
AND I DON'T BELIEVE IT CAN BE STOPPED AT THIS POINT.
THE FUCKING STONE DAGGER...

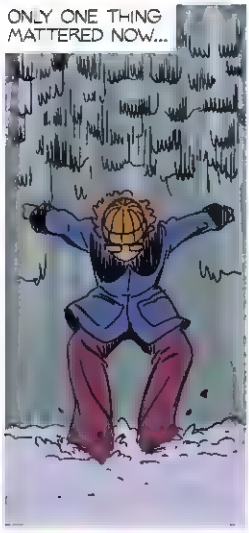
IF THAT'S HERE... THEN... THAT MEANS...
ALL THE CASES IN LANCE'S NOTEBOOK ARE *CONNECTED.*
THEY'RE *ALL* ONE CASE.
STILL... IF SHE'S *SEEN* THE TRUE MOTHER...
PAETER MAY HAVE A POINT.
IS *THAT* WHAT HE WAS TRYING TO TELL HER?
BUT THEN WHAT WAS THAT *NOTE* AT THE LIBRARY, ABOUT THE GIRL IN THE TREES?
WAIT... THE *SYMBOL* HE'D DRAWN...
SHE *KNEW* SHE'D SEEN IT SOMEWHERE BEFORE...
AND NOW HERE IT WAS, RIGHT IN FRONT OF HER.


CLIKK
NO WAY.
LANCE HAD LEFT THIS FOR HER.
BUT HOW COULD HE KNOW, *AGAIN*, WHERE SHE WOULD BE?
55:55
AND WHAT IS IT -A DIGITAL WATCH?
NO, IT FEELS *WRONG*... LIKE IT'S LIGHT AND HEAVY AT THE SAME TIME.
AND THAT'S HOW *MAGIC* FEELS.

IS THAT HOW LANCE KNEW WHAT SHE'D DO?
WAS IT MAGIC... AND NOT THAT SHE WAS A *CHESS PIECE* HE WAS MOVING FROM BEYOND THE GRAVE?
THEN IT'S *DECIDED*... I'LL DO IT. MY *BADGE* GIVES ME A PERFECT COVER.
MAKE IT LOOK LIKE AN ACCIDENT...
HANG ON - WHAT WERE THEY TALKING ABOUT NOW?
WE DON'T NEED ANY MORE *DISTRACTIONS* BEFORE TOMORROW NIGHT.
OF COURSE... IT'LL BE ANOTHER LOCAL TRAGEDY...
GIRL AND HER TWO MOTHERS DIE IN A FIRE.
OH, ARE THEY *LESBIANS*? I GUESS I NEVER NOTICED.
SHIT... MOM AND AUNT JODY.
THAT DETECTIVE LADY IS GOING TO HER HOUSE... TO KILL HER PARENTS.
TO KILL HER.

WHATEVER THE DEAL IS WITH THIS MAGIC WATCH...

SHE'D HAVE TO FIGURE IT OUT LATER.


ONLY ONE THING MATTERED NOW...

GETTING HOME BEFORE DETECTIVE CROSS GOT THERE.

FRIDAY RAN AS FAST AS SHE COULD WITHOUT SLIPPING ON THE ICY SIDEWALKS.

SHE COULD MAKE IT IN TIME...

SHE HAD TO.
End of
Chapter Five

Thank God It's Friday

Hello everyone and welcome to a very special edition of this afterword section. "Special" in that this is Marcos writing, filling in for your favorite writer and purveyor of heartbreaking picture books. Yes, Ed is currently on a special mission somewhere and unable to access his computer. He tells me he's working but I'd rather picture him at some glamorous cocktail bar, sipping a martini and telling stories about his rascally teenage years to some snooty Hollywood types. Yep, that sounds cool, right? Cooler than sitting in front of a computer under a concrete grey sky in Barcelona, that's for sure.
And talking about martinis, have you checked out **Parker: The Martini Edition-Last Call** hardcover from IDW that just came out yesterday? That's a beautiful book if I've ever seen one, collecting Darwyn Cooke's original GNs **The Score** and **Slayground**, with a bunch of never-before-seen sketches, a round table talk with Ed, Sean Phillips, Scott Dunbier and Bruce Timm and an original brand new 17 page tale by Ed & Sean themselves, which is as amazing as you would expect from those two guys. What an incredibly talented pair. Hate them, of course.

What else? Oh, our good friend, amazing artist and overall lovely human being Declan Shalvey is launching his new creator owned series **Old Dog** with Image Comics this August. I did a variant cover for that so I'm going to blame him for this issue of Friday taking six months to finish.

I'm running out of things to say here. Ed usually talks about the books he reads and all that but I'm an artist so basically illiterate. Let me see, I did just finish Marcus Chown's **The Ascent of Gravity**, an earnest effort at trying to explain the evolution of the theories exploring the force of gravity in the plainest, simplest way possible. Obviously, I didn't understand shit. Other than we're all electrons somehow put together to form stuff. Why I ended up as this sort of sentient moving form and not a desk remains a mystery.

So maybe it's time to get back to the reason we're all gathered here. Let me show you a couple of sketches of my original approach to Friday from way back when we first started talking about the series. At that point, I was picturing her as a completely different character, closer to a 70's teenage Wednesday Addams. Yes, wrong day, wrong everything else. Good thing Ed was quick to send a more detailed description before I went any further in the wrong direction.

Huh, what do you know, I got this done. Maybe I should take this writing thing up. Anyway, don't miss our next chapter as things are starting to heat up (maybe literally!) and all hell seems about to break loose (also literally?). And if this sad mass of weeping electrons ends up writing the issue himself, you can bet your ass it's all going to happen inside a small, furniture-less room. With the lights out.

Send any emails to: FridayFitzhugh@gmail.com or send us your messages directly if/when you decide to make a payment, and we'll be back soon-ish.

Marcos
5 freaking minutes before this goes up on May 4th, 2022

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